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AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

the deciding vote

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NOV

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A Note from the Publisher

GONE ON TOUR

Deni

CEREBUS

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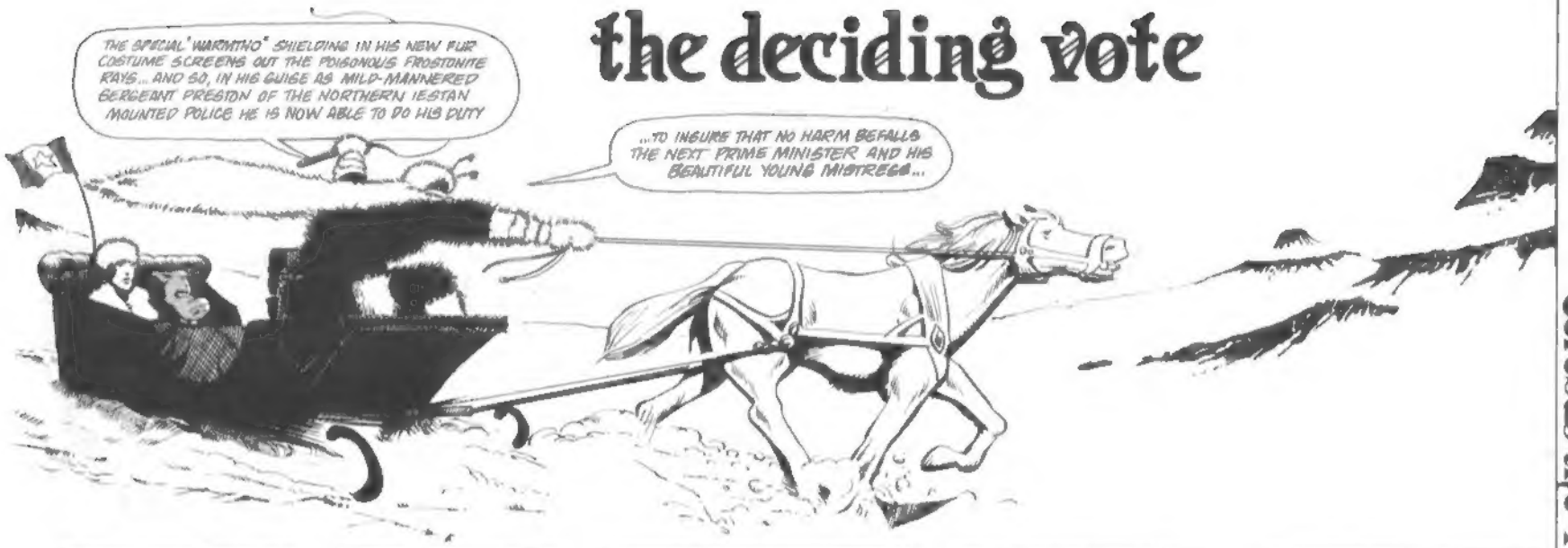

THE SPECIAL "WARMTHO" SHIELDING IN HIS NEW FUR COSTUME SCREENS OUT THE POISONOUS FROSTONITE RAYS... AND SO, IN HIS GUISE AS MILD-MANNERED SERGEANT PRESTON OF THE NORTHERN IESTAN MOUNTED POLICE HE IS NOW ABLE TO DO HIS DUTY
...TO INSURE THAT NO HARM BEFALLS THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER AND HIS BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MISTRESS...

"SO LONG AS I LIVE," HE SWEARS TO THE SNOW-SHROUDED MOUNTAINS, "FREEDOM SHALL BE SAFE FROM DEMOCRACY"
"AND THE PRIME MINISTER, AS WELL..."

THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOT-BLOODED AND WELL-KNOWN MISTRESS STEPS GINGERLY FROM THE OFFICIAL SLED, BRUSHING SERGEANT PRESTON'S ARM AS SHE DOES SO...
SERGEANT PRESTON KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL THE SEETHING PASSION THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S MISTRESS FEELS FOR HIM...
POOR OBSESSED CHICK.
I WUZ WONDRIN' WHEN YOU FOLKS'D GET HERE ...
WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO DISCUSS.
DON'T WE THOUGH?
PLEASE. STEP INTA MAH OFFICE...
IT'S...
IT'S AWFULLY DARK IN HERE.
LORD STORM'SEND
SLAM
KLICK
BANG! BANG!
LORD STORM'SEND
ARTEMIS! KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF!
WAP
THOUGH INTELLIGENT, THE PRIME MINISTER'S MISTRESS HAS TROUBLE EXPRESSING HER TRUE FEELINGS.
PUT THEM SNOWSHOES ON AND FOLLA ME. I GOT FENCES T'MEND
IF I'M GOING TO TALK TO A POLY-TICIAN I WANT TO MAKE SURE I DO SOME-THIN' USEFUL AT THE SAME TIME...
CERBERUS!?
CERBERUS!?
DON'T YOU DARE SIGN ANY AGREE-MENT WITHOUT CONSULTING ME!

ARE YOU SURE THEY'LL BE...
UMPH!
...OKAY?
WUFFA-WUFFA-WUFFA-WUFFA
WHUF
OKAY?
THEY'LL BE MORE THAN OKAY.
WHUF WHUF WHUF
THAT'S THE SHED WHERE I KEEP M' WHITE LIGHTNIN'.
THE MOON ROACH GROPES BENEATH HIS ROACH CAPE FOR THE SECRET COMPARTMENT WITH THE SECRET ROACH MATCHES ...
GET-YOUR-MITTEN-OUT OF THERE THIS INSTANT !!
WAP !
WRONG SECRET COMPARTMENT ...
SHUT UP, KEVITCH...
FSSSS!
OOOOOOOOOOHH!
WHUFFA-WHUFFA-WHUFFA
WHUF!
WHUF WHUF WHUF
I'LL BET THEY GET THROUGH HALF A MASON JAR EACH B'FORE THEY COMMENCE T'PASSIN' OUT

BRINGING ALL SEVEN OF HIS ROACH SENSES TO BEAR ON IT, SERGEANT PRESTON BEGINS HIS EXAMINATION OF WHAT HE SUSPECTS IS AN ILLICIT SUBSTANCE, WUBBA WUBBA TINGLE TINGLE TINGLE
IT SORT OF SMELLS LIKE HONEY.
SO NOW THAT THE ELECTION HAS ENDED IN A TIE, YOU'RE BACK UP HERE AGAIN, LOOKING FER A FAVOUR--A HANDOUT!
LOOK...
"GRAMPAW"
CEREBUS JUST WANTS TO KNOW WHO GETS THE FIFTH REPRESENTATIVE... YOU CAN ACT IT OUT IF THAT'S ANY EASIER FOR YOU.
IT DOESN'T REALLY TASTE LIKE ANYTHING.
LOOK, "SONNY" YOU REMIND ME OF A MULE I ONCE OWNED. JEST LIKE YOU, SHE WAS ALWAYS MAKIN' NOISE AN' SHE NEVER LISTENED TO A WORD I SAID
I FINALLY HAD HER DESTROYED AND SHE COULD SNOWSHOE A DAMN SIGHT BETTER'N YOU CAN...
I HOPE I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR...
WHERE ARE WE?
ON THE FLOOR...
IS IT SAFE?
AS LONG AS WE DON'T MOVE...
NOOO PROBLEM.

A FEW WEEK BACK, THE DE-PARTMENT OF ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT SENT ME A STRAPPIN' BIG LAD IN A VELVET SIGGY JACKET WHO TOLD ME I WAS SUPPOSED TO DE-STRIBUTE THESE BALLOTS HE GIVE ME TO EVEBUDDY IN THE PRO-VINCE OVER THE AGE O'EIGHTEEN...
I HITCHED OLD WILMA UP TO 'ER CARRIAGE AN' I SPENT A WHOLE DAY I COULDA BIN MENDIN' FENCES RIDIN' ALL OVER THE GOOD FATHER'S LAND.
WHUF WHUF
I DE-LIVERED 'EM TO ALL SEVENY-EIGHT FOLKS OVER THE AGE LIMIT WHO COULD SPELL THAR OWN NAMES OR AT LEAST MAKE AN "X"
AN' I TOLD EVER'LAST ONE OF 'EM THAT THE FELLER IN THE SISSY JACKET SAID IF ANY OF THE BALLOTS WERE CRUMPLED UP, RIPPED'R IN ANY OTHER WAY DE-SPOILED OR DE-FILED THE BALLOT WAS NOT TO BE COUNTED...
WELL, SIR... THE DAY AFORE YESTIDDY...
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
...I SPENT THE WHOLE DAY GATHERIN' UP THE BALLOTS. THEM FOLKS WHO HAD GIVEN THE MATTER A LITTLE THOUGHT HANDED THE BALLOTS BACK ALL CRUMPLED UP. THEM FOLKS WHO HAD GIVEN THE MATTER A LOT OF THOUGHT TOLD ME THEY LOST THEIRS
THEM FOLKS WHAT HAD TALKED IT OVER WITH THEIR WIMMEN-FOLK SICKED THEIR DOGS ON ME...
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
UNFORTUNATELY, AS IS BOUND T'HAPPEN ANY TIME YOU ASSUME THAT A PERSON CAN THINK JUST CAUSE HE'S OVER THE AGE O'EIGHTEEN, SOME FOLKS DIDN'T DO ANY THINKIN' ABOUT THE MATTER AT ALL. THEY JEST PUT A NEAT LITTLE "X" IN WHICHEVER BOX THEY WAS PARTIAL TO.
THERE WAS FOUR BALLOTS LIKE THAT...
FOUR?!
OUT OF SEVENTY-EIGHT?
YESSIR. LAST TIME ONE - THIS TIME FOUR...
IT'S LIKE WATCHIN' GANGRENE SPREAD.

AH DE-CIDED TO SEND TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO YOU AN' TWO TO THE GOAT, SINCE THAT'S THE WAY THE BALLOTS COME OUT, AND HOPE NOBUDDY'D NOTICE THERE WAS A REPRESENTATIVE MISSING...
WELL, SIR, WHEN LORD JULIUS SHOWED UP AND TOLD ME IT WAS A TIE, I KNEW IT WAS THE GOOD FATHER'S NATURAL JUSTICE AT WORK...
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
...
PAYING ME BACK FER AIDING AN' ABETTING POLYTICIANS IN THE COMMISSION OF AN ELECTION...
NOW I GOTTA DE-CIDE WHICH ONE O' YOU TWO BOZOS GETS THE WHOLE BLAMED CITY-STATE ON A SILVER PLATTER
...
WHAT [PUFF] DID YOU SAY [PANT] TO LORD JULIUS?
I ASKED HIM IF'N HE HAD THE ALBATROSS, AND HE SAID "NO." I EXPECT YOU AIN'T GOT IT NEITHER...
CEREBUS [PANT] ALMOST [PUFF] HAD IT.
IF'N Y'MEAN TH' RANSOM THE McGREW BROTHERS PICKED UP FOR YOU — THAT ONE WAS A FAKE...
WHUFFA WHUFFA WHUFFA
THE KEVILLISTS SENT THAT ONE HOPIN' YOU'D THINK IT WAS THE REAL ONE AND TIP YOUR HAND EARLY. TWENNY PEOPLE DIED AFORE GUMBUDDY HAD THE SENSE TO CHIP OFF THE ENAMEL T'FIND OUT IT WAS ONLY LEAD UNNERNEATH.
WHAT [PUFF] IS THE [PANT] ALBATROSS FOR?
...
Y'MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW?!
[PUFF] NO
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
WHY THE HECK DO YOU WANNA BE PRIME MINISTER, THEN?
FOR [PUFF] THE MONEY.
YOU TRYIN' T'BE REFRESHIN' OR SOMETHING?

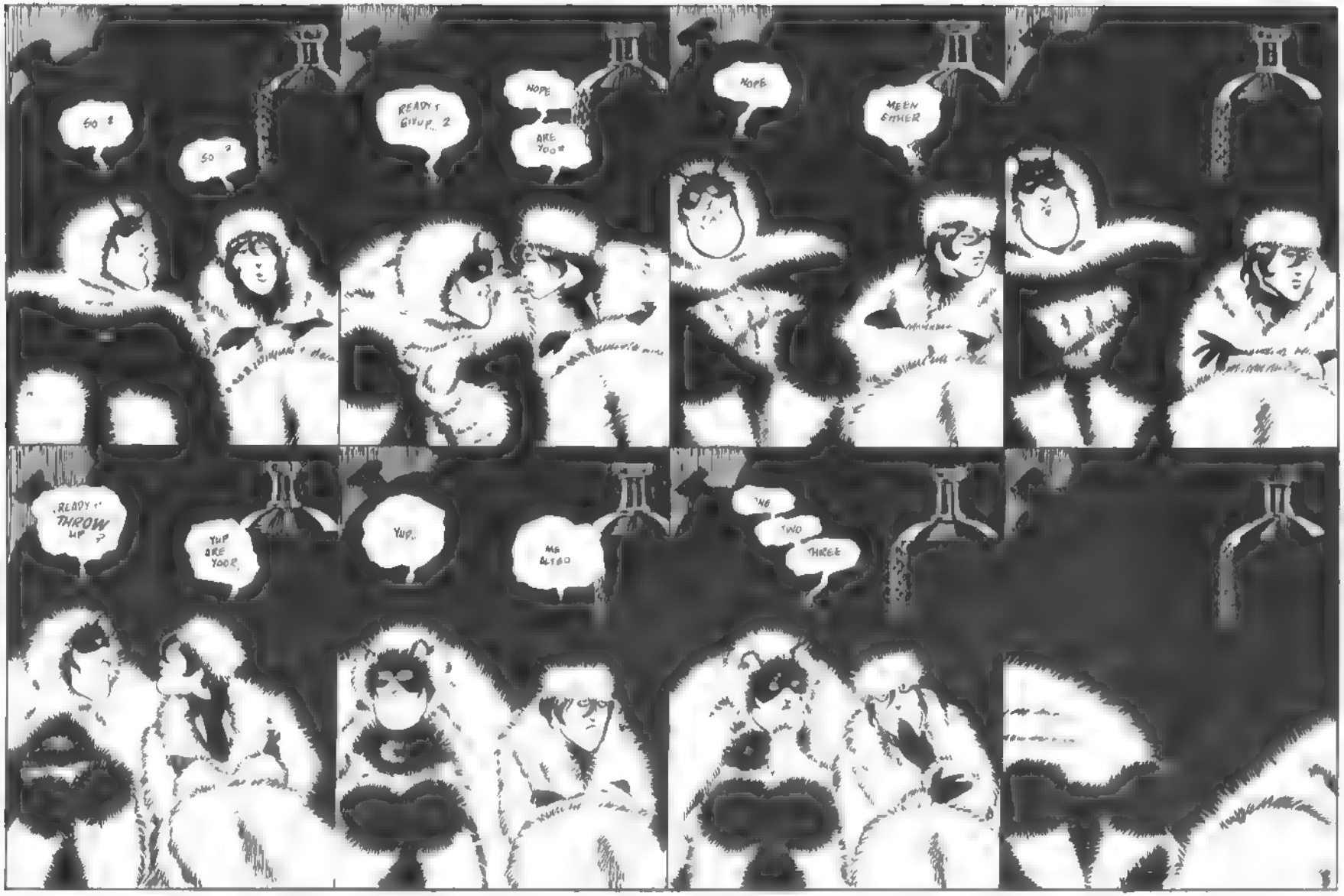
WOOOo...
IT'S A GOOD THING THAT STUFF DOESN'T LAST VERY LONG... I WAS...
MY ARM!
LOOK AT MY ARM!!
IT'S STRETCHING!! IT'S STRETCHING!!
MY OTHER ARM...
IT'S COVERED IN ORANGE ROCKS!!
WHAT TH'...?
I'M... I'M CHANGING
GETTING TALL!
RIP.
RIP.
RIP.
STRONG!
GREEN!
ROACH-HULK KILL!
THWIPP THWIPP
YOUR FACE IS COVERED WITH WEB-FLUID...
AAAARGHH!
HEE HEE

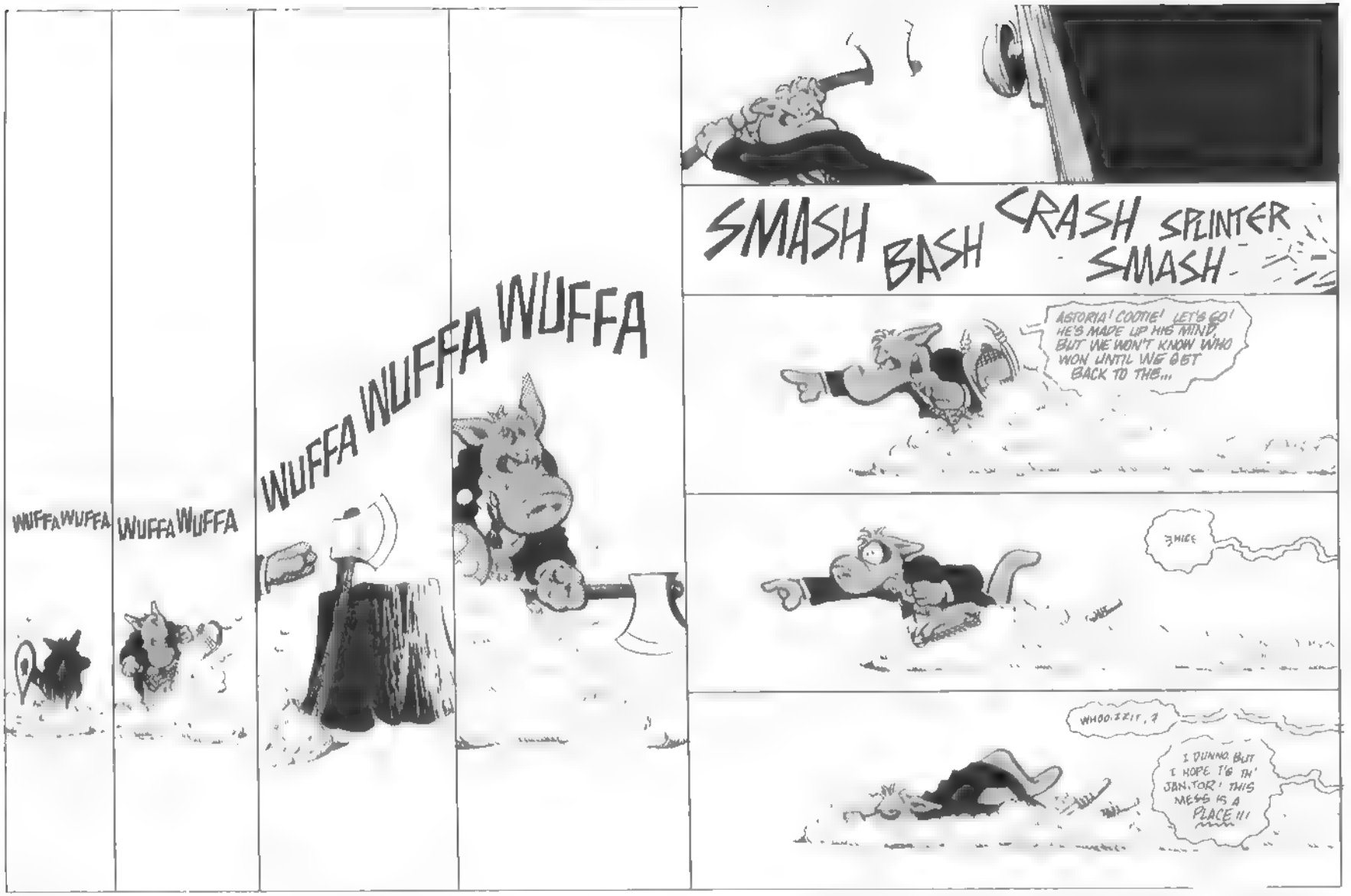
THEN THERE'S BRIAN MAK ›PANT‹ MUFFIN ... ASTORIA ›PUFF‹ MADE HIM CEREBUS' ›GASP‹ PERSONAL ADVISOR ›PANT‹
WUF! WUF!
WHY?
›PUFF‹ BECAUSE HE WAS ›PANT‹ THE ONE WHO ›PUFF‹ SAID CEREBUS ›GASP‹ SHOULD BE PRIME ›PUFF‹ MINISTER...
›PUFF‹ CEREBUS ›PANT‹ KEPT THE ›PANT‹ McBREWS ›PUFF‹ SO THEY COULDN'T ›PANT‹ TELL ANY ›PUFF‹ BODY ABOUT CEREBUS ›PANT‹ KIDNAPPING ›PUFF‹ HIMSELF...
WUF
BLAKELY ›PUFF‹ AND ›GASP‹ FILGATE ›PANT‹ BECAUSE ›PUFF‹ THEY ›PANT‹ COULD ›WHEEZE‹ GUARANTEE ›PUFF‹ RETIRE ›GASP‹ SENTATIVES
IS THERE ENYBUDDY ELSE?
›PANT‹ THERESA ›PUFF‹ A ›GASP‹ STORIA'S ›PANT‹ A ›GASP‹ ASSISTANT AND ›GASP‹ THE ›PANT‹ MOON ›GASP‹ ROACH ›PANT‹ HE'S ›PANT‹ HE'S ›GASP‹ HE'S ›GASP‹
WUF WUF WUF
"THE FELLER WHO LOOKS LIKE A SIX-FOOT BLEACHED BUMBLEBEE"
›YES‹
›GASP‹
›PANT‹
GOT A MATCH?
HERE ›GASP‹ ›PANT‹ ›PUFF‹ ›GASP‹
FWOOOSHH!

HMMCRACKLE ZAKKTTT
HUMMZ!!
HIZRAKKT ZWAMZWAM
CLOSER CLOSER
SO CLOSE SHE CAN SMELL HIS BREATH SMELL HIS ARM PITS IT IS THEN THAT SHE REALIZES WHY HE HAS NEVER HAD A GIRLFRIEND
HE FEELS HIS PSIONIC MAGIC SHIELDS CRUMBLING
STRUGGLES TO MAINTAIN THEM
YOU'RE RIGHT

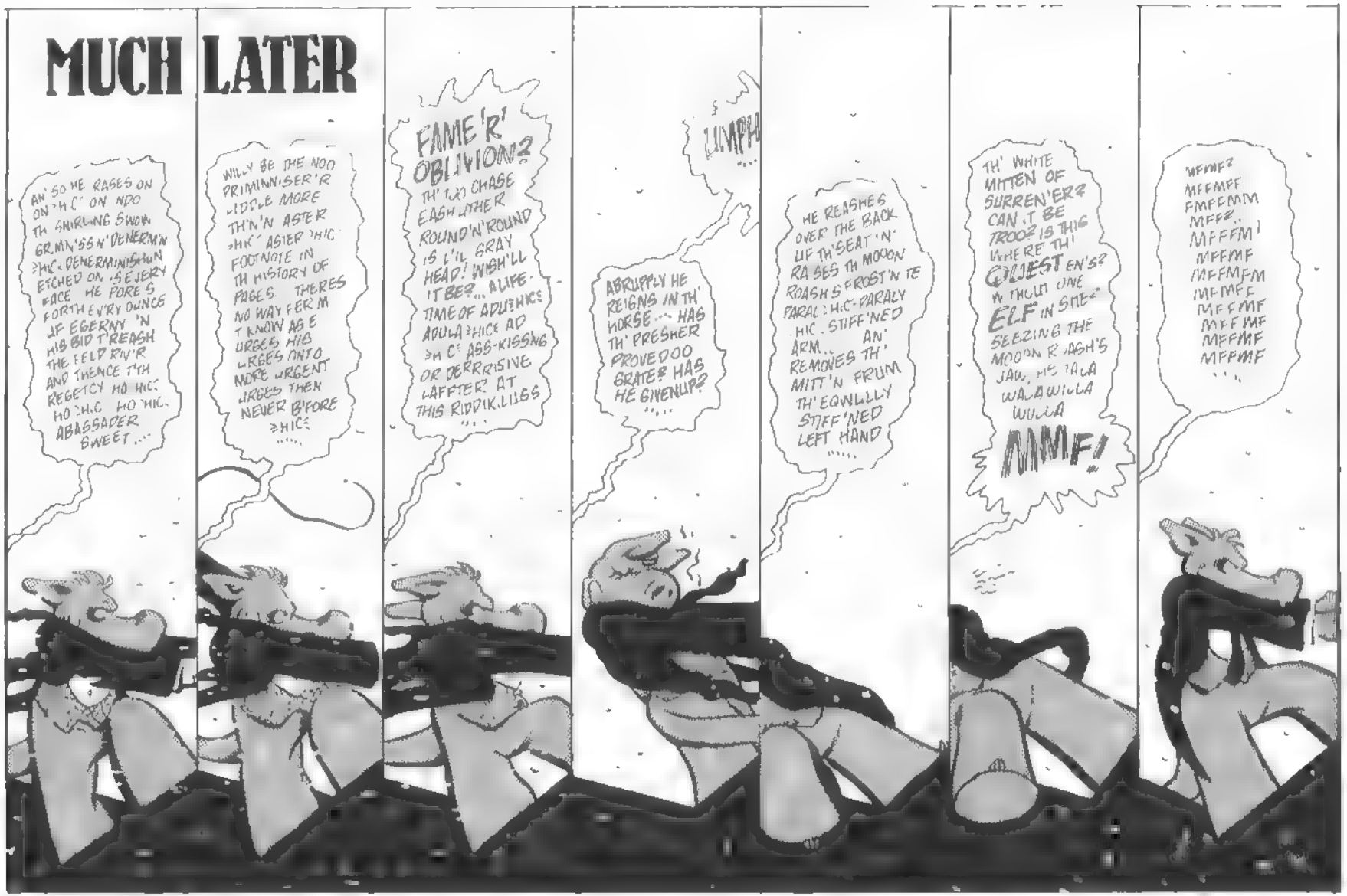
Y SEE THET FELLER BITTIN' UP ON HIS HORSE? THE ONE OVER YONDER ON THE NEXT RIDGE? WITH THE HAT LIKE MINE?
GASP! UH HUH
WELL, SIR THETS M'COUSIN ELMO.
BY LIGHTIN' THET TORCH, I JUST GIVE ELMO A SIGNAL...
A SIGNAL AS T'WHO I'VE CHOSE T'BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER...
WUF WUF WUF WUF WUF WUF WUF WUF
AN RIGHT NOW, ELMO IS HEADED FER THE REGENCY HOTEL T ANNOUNCE THET TH' CHOICE HAS BEEN MADE AND WHO THE LUCKY BOAT.... OR AARDVARK ... BE!
WUF WUF WUF WUF
WHO GASP? PANTS
WHO GASP, IS... IT?
SEEIN' AS HOW YOU POLYTICIANS'RE SO PARTIAL T' SURPRISE TAXES 'N SURPRISE ELECTIONS 'N' SURPRISE VOTES N SURPRISE BILLS ...
WUF WUF WUF
HO
YOU HAVE A NICE TRIP BACK, NOW.. Y HEARZ

WUFFA WUFFA WUFFAWUFFAWUFFAWUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFAWUFFAWU
FFAWUFFAWUFFAWUFF
THE CHOICE HAS BEEN MADE
YUP
I COULDN'T CHANGE YOUR MIND EVEN IF YOU WANTED TO
NOW
YOU'RE SURE
YUP
WUFFAWUFFAWUFFAWUFFA WUFFA WU
CERBERUS WONDERS IF THAT WAS IT'S LAST OFFICIAL ACT AS PRIME MINISTER OR AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.


SO ?
SO ?
READY ? GIVUP.. 2
NOPE
ARE YOU ?
NOPE
MEEN EITHER
READY ? THROW UP ?
YUP ARE YOOR
YUP.
ME ALSO
ONE
TWO
THREE

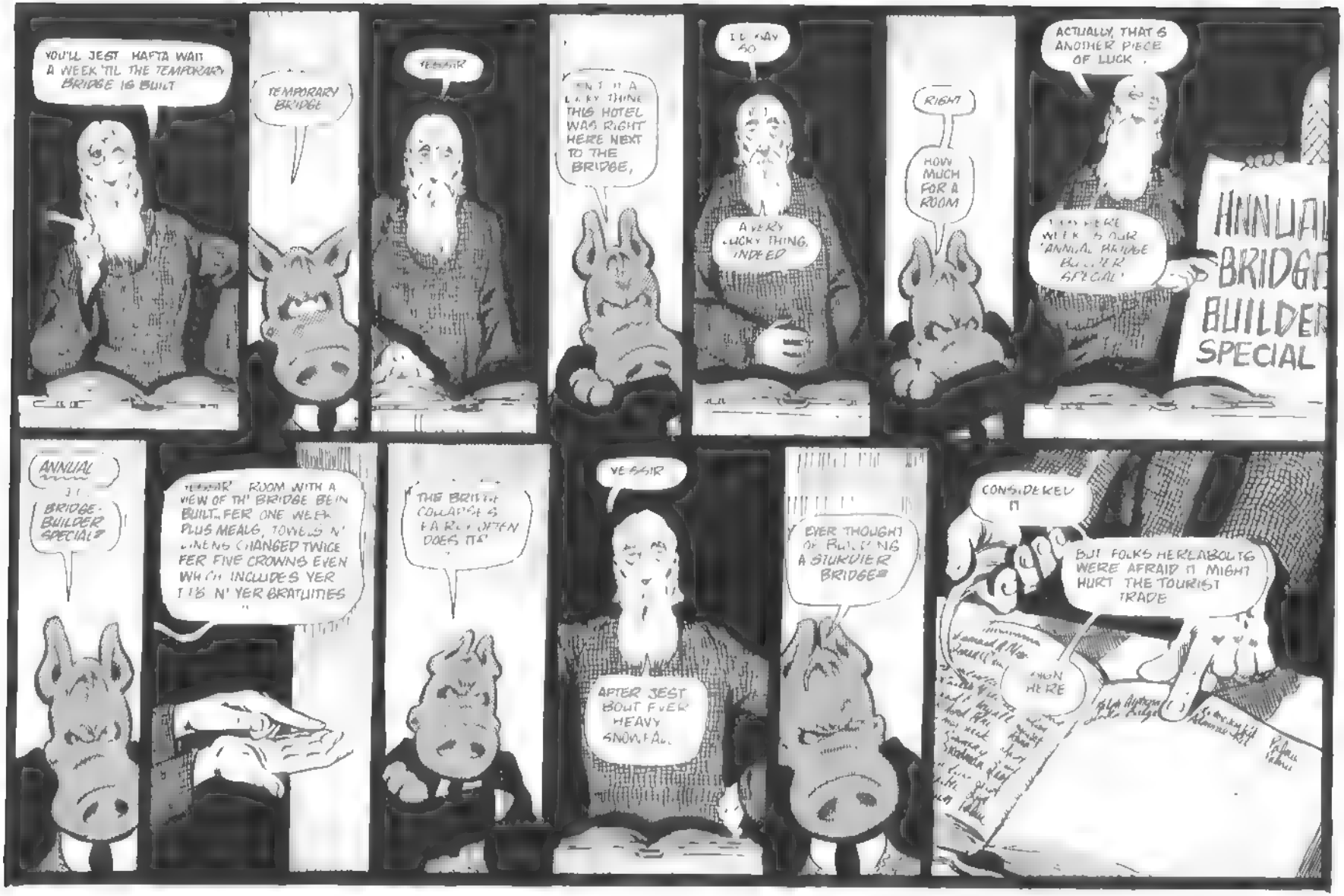

WUFFA WUFFA
WUFFA WUFFA
WUFFA WUFFA WUFFA
SMASH BASH CRASH SPLINTER SMASH
ASTORIA! COOTIE! LET'S GO! HE'S MADE UP HIS MIND, BUT WE WON'T KNOW WHO WON UNTIL WE GET BACK TO THE...
NICE
WHOOSZIT?
I DUNNO BUT I HOPE I'S TH' JANITOR! THIS MESS IS A PLACE!!

...UNHAND ME FOR I ALONE WIELD TH' POWER ?HIC? COSMIC...
UNHAND ME ALSO --FOR I ALONE CONTROL THE ?HICE X-FACTOR
NGH!!
...?HIC - NO USE, STORIA
...MMM ?
HE'S MADE OF GRAY ADAMANTIUM, TH' ONLY SUBSTANCE THAT CAN REMOVE OUR POWERS N MAKE ME WORLD SEE M N TH APPROPRIATE DIRECTION
GREAT ?HICE FROSTON
YOU WOULDN' HAPPEN HAVE A FEW YARDS O' LEAD FOIL ON YOU?..
I THINKS I LEFT IT IN M'OTHER COAT
W'HA KRAK OF HISSNIP TH' ANDROID DATE ISOLATIN IN SEARCHIN TH' ELUSIVE TH' HARD'T GIT PRIME M N.SIRSH.P
NEITHER SNORE NOR SLEET NOR SMELLOV PUKE SHALL STAY THIS EEGER EARTH-PIG FROM AN ALMOG' ?HICE HONEST JOB


MUCH LATER
AN' SO HE RASES ON ON 'HIC' ON NDO TH SWIRLING SWON GR.MN'SS N' DENERM'N 'HIC' DENERMINISHUN ETCHED ON 'SEJERY FACE HE PORE'S FORTH EV'RY OUNCE OF EGERAY 'N HIS BID T'REASH THE FELD RN'R AND THENCE T'TH REGETCY HO HIC HO 'H.C HO 'HIC. ABASSADER SWEET...
WILLY BE THE NOO PRIMINN'SER'R LIDDLE MORE TH'N'N ASTER 'HIC' ASTER 'HIC FOOTNOTE IN TH HISTORY OF PAGES. THERES NO WAY FER M T KNOW AS E URGES HIS URGES INTO MORE URGENT URGES THEN NEVER B'FORE 'HIC .....
FAME 'R' OBLIVION? TH' TWO CHASE EASH OTHER ROUND'N'ROUND IS L'IL GRAY HEAD! WISH'LL 'T BE?... A LIFE-TIME OF ADU'HICS ADULA 'HICS AD 'H C' ASS-KISSNG OR DERRISIVE LAFFTER AT THIS RIDDIK.LUSS ....
ABRUPPLY HE REIGNS IN TH' HORSE.... HAS TH' PRESHER PROVE DOO GRATE? HAS HE GIVENUP? .....
HE REASHES OVER THE BACK UF TH'SEAT 'N' RA SES TH MOOON ROASH S FROST'N TE FARAL 'HIC' PARALY .HIC. STIFF'NED ARM... AN' REMOVES TH' MITT'N FRUM TH' EQWLLLY STIFF'NED LEFT HAND .....
TH' WHITE MITTEN OF SURREN'ER? CAN IT BE TROO? IS THIS WHERE TH' OBJEST EN'S? W THOUT ONE ELF IN SITE? SEEZING THE MOOON R ASH'S JAW, HE TALA WALA WULLA WULLA MMF!
MFMF? MFFMFF FMFFMM MFF?.. MFFFM! MFFMF MFFMFM MFMFF MFFMF MFFMF MFFMF MFFMF ...

MUCH, MUCH LATER
WHOOOA..
EVENIN
EVENING
CERBERUS HAS BEEN TRYING TO REACH THE FROZ RIVER SINCE EARLY THIS AFTERNOON..
HOW MUCH FARTHER IS IT?
WELL SIR
HE DEPENDS
DEPENDS?
DEPENDS ON WHAT..!?
DEPENDS ON WHETHER YOU KEEP GOING WEST OR WHETHER YOU DECIDE T'TURN SOUTH SOMETIME
OH
IF'N YOU DO DECIDE T'TURN SOUTH, IT'S ABOUT A TWO-HOUR TRIP...
THE MOON ROACH IS SUDDENLY GRATEFUL FOR THE MITTEN SHOVED IN HIS MOUTH
UNMUFFLED GIGGLING WOULD HAVE CAUSED HIM TO BE SEVERELY BEATEN ABOUT THE HEAD AND SHOULDERS WITH GRAY FROSTONITE FISTS.

SURE IS
BUT IT'S
OUT TOO
ANOTHER HIGH
DOESN'T GET HOT
MUCH SINCE THE
AVALANCHE CLOSED
TH ROAD THOUGH
BUT IT'S OUT
TOO RIGHT?
WONDERFUL
THANKS FOR
YOUR TIME.
OKAY
HOW DOES
SOMEONE
GET TO
GREATER
WELL, SIR?


YOU'LL JEST HAFTA WAIT A WEEK 'TIL THE TEMPORARY BRIDGE IS BUILT
TEMPORARY BRIDGE
YESSAH
ISN'T IT A LUCKY THING THIS HOTEL WAS RIGHT HERE NEXT TO THE BRIDGE,
A VERY LUCKY THING, INDEED
I'LL SAY SO
RIGHT
HOW MUCH FOR A ROOM
ACTUALLY, THAT'S ANOTHER PIECE OF LUCK.
ANNUAL BRIDGE BUILDER SPECIAL
ANNUAL BRIDGE-BUILDER SPECIAL?
YESSAH' ROOM WITH A VIEW OF TH' BRIDGE BEIN BUILT... FER ONE WEEK PLUS MEALS, TOWELS N' LINENS CHANGED TWICE FER FIVE CROWNS EVEN WHICH INCLUDES YER TAX N' YER BRATWITIES
THE BRITISH COLLAPSES FARLY OFTEN DOES IT?
YESSAH
AFTER JEST BOUT EVER HEAVY SNOWFALL
EVER THOUGHT OF BUILDING A STURDIER BRIDGE?
CONSIDERED IT
BUT FOLKS HEREABOUTS WERE AFRAID IT MIGHT HURT THE TOURIST TRADE
YOU ARE HERE

FIVE CROWNS EH?
YUP
CEREBUS
ANY RELATION T'THE NEW PRIME MINISTER?
ACTUALLY CEREBUS
NEW.
PRIME MINISTER?
YUP. OUR E.M. WAS BY EARLIER T'DAY... HE TOLD ME TH' DECISION HAS BIN MADE..
I'M..HIM!!.. HE!
I MEAN, CEREBUS IS THE NEW ME!
I WAS ALWAYS ME BUT NOW I'M THE NEW HIM!!
WELL, I'LL BE THE NEW PRIME MINISTER STAYIN' AT MY HOTEL..
YEAH!
WOW!
YOU GOT ANY LUGGAGE, MR PRIME MINISTER, SIR?
WHAT? LUGGAGE?
UH NO!
BUT CEREBUS HAS TWO DRUNKS OUTSIDE IN HIS SLED..!

FINE FINE HERE'S YER ROOM KEY N A BOTTLE T HELP YOU PASS THE TIME MR PRIME MINISTER
OH THE HOUSE
ON THE HOUSE WELL THANK YOU..
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
YOU JEST GO UP THOSE STAIRS T'YER ROOM N RELAX ..
RUMM RELAX
AN I'LL BE BRINGING YER DRUNKS UP IN A FEW MINUTES ..
Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer
I am enclosing my hotel's bill for eight
hundred and fifty crowns for use of
the Diplomatic Suite for one week
by the new Prime Minister and his
staff. The supplemental laundry
bill of fifty crowns and the liquor

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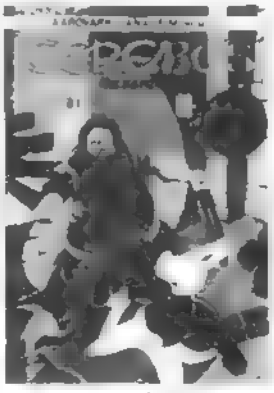

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A UNIQUE STORY

OH, MES AMIS ZIS IS SERIOUS! I 'AVE ZE IMPORTANT AUDITION NEXT WEEK AND I 'AVE TO LOSE ZE TEN POUNDS! ZIS BOOK EET SAY TO TRY ZE BEAUTY METHOD OF ZE THIRD WORLD — EAT NUSSING BUT WATER FOR A WEEK!
DAT'S RIDICULOUS, MAM'SELLE! THE ONLY REASON DEY CAN STAND DAT IN DOSE PLACES IS BECAUSE DEY AIN'T GOT NUTTIN' BUT WATER!
ARN SABA'S
Neil the Horse
ARN SABA
MAIS NON! EET SAY 'ERE ALL YOU NEED IS ZE WEEL POWER! MAYBE YOU DO NOT 'AVE EET, BUT I 'AVE EET PLENTY!
YEH! ME TOO!
LISTEN, I GOT ALL THE WILL POWER I WANTS TA HAVE! BUT—
AH OUI, I SEEN DEP WE ALL 'AVE ZE WEEL POWER LET US ALL LOSE ZE WEIGHT TOGETHER! EET WEEL BE FUNNY D'ACCORD?
OKAY!
WELL — UH — UHH —
?
MERVEILLEUX! OKAY, ZE BOOK SAY TO THROW OUT EVERY'SING IN ZE KEETCHEN
UHH — WHAT DOES WILL POWER MEAN?
WELL I GUESS EASY, BECAUSE I ARE EAT IN A RESTAURANT EVERY DAY SEENCE 1972!
THANKS TA YER BIG MOUTH, IT MEANS WE AIN'T GONNA EAT FER A WEEK!
UH OH!
NOW ZE BOOK SAY TO DRINK LOTS OF WATER AND TO FORGET ABOUT FOOD!
RIGHT

HOURS LATER.
CRIPES! ANUDDER PIZZA AD!
'ERE, TURN ZAT OFF, AND WE READ SOME'SING! S'INK OF ZE HIGHER THOUGHTS!
YEH LIKE BANANAS!
FOUR MORE HOURS.
SHUTUP, MAM'SELLE! HAVE SOME MORE WATER!
KNOCK KNOCK
HEY! I SMELL SOMETHING GOOD!
HELLO, DEARIE, I'VE JUST BEEN BAKING! WOULD YOU AND YOUR FRENDS LIKE A FEW COOKIES?
OH! MRS ELEPHANTE! YUM! COOKIES! I-UH- ZAT EES - OOOOOH!
SNACKS DON'T COUNT, DO THEY?
MESSEURS! GET BACK! EET EES ZE DANGER! WE ALMOST LOSE ZE WEEL POWER!
SAY WHAT DEAR?
SO FAR WELL DONE! SO MUCH FUN!
COME ON! ZE BOOK SAY A LEETLE WALK TAKE ZE MIND OFF ZE EATING!
CHALK UP ANUDDER ONE FER TH' BOOK!
FALAFEL
Greasy
PIZZA
Food Bag
CONGRATULATIONS, SIR! YOU ARE THE ONE-MILLIONTH PERSON TO DROOL AS YOU WALK PAST CHEZ ESTOMACHE! YOU WIN ALL THE FOOD YOU CAN EAT!
I SAVE YOU SOAPY! DOWN Z S ALLEY. QUEEK!
COME BACK! WE'LL GIVE YOU DOUBLE WHAT YOU CAN EAT!
EEZ AN 'S A SEAFOOD JOINT TOO!
WE LOSE HEEM! EEN Z S BACK DOOR!

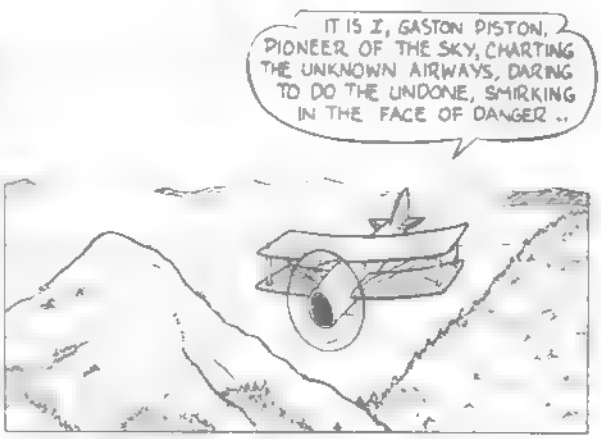
A BUFFET SUPPER!
THIS S_KE A SUPERMARKET, ONLY COOKED!
HELLO! MY NAME S ——.
OH, ..OOK AT ZE CO..D CUTS AND ZE POTATO SALAD!
YOO-HOO! POUPÉE!

OH! ELLO AMANDA!
WHAT A SURPRISE! SAY, I HEAR YOU'LL BE AT THE AUDITION NEXT WEEK, TOO!
—OH, YOU MUST TRY THOSE PASTRIES!

NO SANK YOU! YOU HAVE REMIND ME ZAT I MUST LOSE ZE TEN POUNDS! ME AND MY FRIENDS, WE HAVE ZE WEEL POWER! RIGHT?
UH— RIGHT!
HELLO POUPÉE! I JUST TRIED TO CALL YOU. HOW ABOUT DINNER TONIGHT?

MON DIEU! ZIS CITY, EET EES FOOD CRAZY! WE GO CAMPING, WHERE ZERE EES NO TEMPTATION!
MAM'SELLE DON'T FEEL YA NEEDS TA DO D'S JUST FER US!

ALLONS! WE HIKE AWAY FROM ZE ROAD, EEN CASE ZERE EES AN ICE-CREAM TRUCK!
HOW LONG S A WEEK?
BIG SOFTIE CAMPING AREA


IT IS I, GASTON PISTON, PIONEER OF THE SKY, CHARTING THE UNKNOWN AIRWAYS, DARING TO DO THE UNDONE, SMIRKING IN THE FACE OF DANGER ..

BUT HO! THE DASHING AVIATOR'S GIMLET EYEBALL PERCEIVES A "MOVEMENT" — EGAD! TRAVELLERS MAROONED IN THE TRACKLESS WILDS! PROBABLY THEY ARE WEAK AND DELERIOUS....

AND SO THE DAUNTLESS HERO PERFORMS YET ANOTHER DRAMATIC RESCUE!

WHAT'S THAT?
ZE K-RATION! HEY! CRÉTIN! GO AWAY!
THEY ARE SIGNALLING ? AH! OF COURSE! THE OUTDOORSMAN HAS A KEEN SENSE OF THE RITUALS OF THE CAMPFIRE!
YOU KNOW, I SINK I 'AVE REACH ZE POINT WHERE ZE APPETITE EET GO AWAY COMPLETELY!
MARSHMALLOWS 'N WEENIES!
HOW MUCH LONGER?
ONLY ONE AND A 'ALF DAYS - OH ZE BOOK SAY ZAT ZE RAIN WATER EES ZE BEST!
D'YA THINK YA CAN CONVINCE DESE MOSQUITOS TA STOP EATIN'?
8
HEY, WAKE UP! TODAY'S THE DAY!
COOL IT! I WAS DREAMIN' ABOUT A HAMBURGER!
ALORS! ZE TEN POUNDS! EET EES GONE!
I SEENK I CELEBRATE WIS A LEETLE SALAD AND A CUP OF TEA! EET EES WONDERFUL TO 'AVE ZE WEEL POWER, NON?
YEH, SWELL! IN FACT, I T'INKS I'LL CELEBRATE WIT' A THICK STEAK AN' PAN FRIES AN' A BLACK FOREST CAKE, AN' IRISH COFFEE, AN'...
TAKE BANANAS!
CLOSED! EET EES SUNDAY!
EVERYTHING IS CLOSED!
LAST CHANCE GRILL
HEY! OPEN UP! DIS IS AN EMERGENCY!
WELL, ZE BOOK SAY ZAT AN EXTRA DAY OR TWO, EET EES GOOD FOR YOU!
MORE WATER NE-?
BURP!
SURE.

ARE YOU A REAL CEREBUS FANATIC?

Do you count the days until each issue comes out?
Then why haven't you joined the Friends of Cerebus Club?

This is what you will get:

INTERVIEWS

THE UNIVERSAL AARDVARK

Glenn Lisle interviews Dave Sim

UNPUBLISHED DAVE SIM ART

FAN ART

and much more ! ! !

Here's just a sample of last year's "goodies".

- Membership certificate
- "Fight Like an Aardvark" bumper sticker
- "Friends of Cerebus" lapel sticker
- Wallet-sized membership card

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave

Issue 40 is your best in a long while. Not only did you manage to pick up the pace considerably, but your blend of humour and -- for lack of a better word -- serious plot elements was very skilfull. The political machinations in the foreground of the story were perfectly contrasted by the idiot sibling yells of Dirty Drew and Dirty Fleagle, and the Moon Roach's running mental narration. The Moon Roach is probably your most on-target satire -- a perfect harpooning of overdone Marvel melodrama.

Meanwhile Cerebus is beginning to adapt more readily to his new, more subtle role as politician. Starting last issue, when Cerebus negotiated with Blakely without Astoria's help (which may or may not turn out to be helpful help in the long run), he has stepped more into the forefront of the action -- as symbolized by #40's cover -- Cerebus surrounded by his entourage, clearly at the centre of things. Your comment on politics is made so much more effective by having Cerebus actually want the wealth and power of the Prime Ministership -- shown by the Aardvarkian Empire page. Much more valid a comment than Howard the Duck's run for office in 1976 -- Howard never succumbed to ambition, but Cerebus, the protagonist of the story, does. This reveals the real problem with politics -- that well-meaning, idealistic people get into it, and then get their priorities, and often their morality, warped by the need to maintain, or in Cerebus' case, gain power.

Speaking of politics, I have a few minor quibbles (quibble, quibble) with the economic/political situation you have created. Iest is currently in a massive recession caused by a too-massive deficit (hmmm . . . sounds familiar -- will Cerebus learn the Trudeau salute if elected?). However, in an answer to a letter asking about the Art Deco architecture, you said that it was due to the rising merchant class' demand for work from artisans used to producing religious artifacts. My question is, how can you have a rising merchant class, which implies (or is that infers?) a great deal of money in the middle of a recession, which is notable for a lack of money? I'd also argue with the existence of a democracy in a medieval-type setting, but this issue reveals that it really isn't democratic, the votes being controlled more or less by the wealthy and, anyway, it gives you a chance to satirize present politics.

I'm glad the pace has speeded up -- there are four or five sequences in the latest issue rather than just one. My major complaint with the "High Society" series has been its generally snail-like pacing. Slow pacing is an effective device -- you used it very well in #36's conversation between Jaka and Cerebus -- but only in contrast to faster or at least medium pacing. A prime example of this was last issue's offering. The whole thing was a long conversation which did little to advance plot or characterization, punctuated by a gratuitous fight between the Moon Roach and Dirty Fleagle & Dirty Drew.

The fight brings up my main complaint with the latest issue, or more accurately, the space between issues. How did the Dirty Bros. go from being unconscious felons on the carpet in #39 to Cerebus' bodyguards in #40? Why is the Moon Roach hanging around with them when last issue he thought that they were members of the Red Claw? How did Bran MacMufin and Astoria join forces? Why is Bran now Cerebus' choice for military advisor when in the past Cerebus thought of him only as a crackpot? None of these questions are unanswerable -- but they should have been answered. Characterization is very important, and characters should have their relationships to each other as well as their relationships to Cerebus established. The space taken up by the conversation with Blakely could have been filled up with this information. As it stands, this is the biggest lapse between issues since Cerebus ended #13 walking off into the sunset carrying a holy symbol on Terim, and began #14 being carried into the city of Palnu as a hero. Often I begin a Cerebus wondering whether I have missed an issue, which is especially disquieting, since I subscribe.

Still, I'm enjoying the "High Society" series more and more as it goes on, even though it seems that my short grey furry hero is heading for quite a fall. His adaption to the role of politico is only going to increase the height of that fall -- I suspect that he is going to get very comfortable, only to get the rug pulled out from under him. Julius is running a goat against him in the background of the story, Julius just uses a front of foolishness to get what he wants -- and we have yet to see Julius fail. Cerebus has made the mistake of underestimating him before -- notably when he was planning with Gudre to storm Palnu -- and may be about to do so again. And we have yet to get the full story from Astoria -- we know she's hiding profits from Cerebus, and she's likely hiding more. And what is her relationship to Julius? I have the sinking feeling that Cerebus' lack of curiosity on this will lead to his downfall.

Which leads us to the Unique Stories. I enjoyed Goat, but it was really an extra three pages of Cerebus -- sorry, four. Not that I mind an extra four pages of Cerebus in the slightest -- I wish you could do it every month. Other than Goat, I admired Welcome to Heaven, Doctor Franklin because of its offbeat plot and humour -- it was truly a Unique Story. However, the Salamander two-parter was unattractive and incomprehensible, and the Slark was essentially what Harbour Ellison calls a fuzzy-footed fairy story. If Bill Loebs was to come up with a viable concept for a series to be published by Aardvark-Vanaheim, I'd buy it -- or perhaps you

CEREBUS ORIGINAL ART

I am now offering pages of Cerebus for sale at $100.00 per page. Payment is in U.S. currency for rich Americans, $110.00 Canadian per page for victims of Allan MacEachen's budget. I have issue 30 to the present complete. I am not selling certain pages (all of #36, for example). I want to sell a few pages a month, so if they start moving too fast, the price goes up. The pages will be mailed to you after I draw each issue (generally the first of the month). Please allow four weeks for delivery if you want to get formal about it. Certified cheques or money orders only, payable to Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc. at the address above. Please list as many alternatives as you can. Sorry, I don't have time to send out lists of whats sold and what isn't. There is no discount for quantity, so please don't ask.

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

could try an anthology title. A series would likely be better received financially, though, as the death of things like Star*Reach and the continued life of Cerebus points out. Well I'm running out of wind, out of space on the page, and ink on my typewriter ribbon, so good luck, keep turning out the best comic around (and the only comic I read), and avoid otters bearing nuclear weapons.

Robin D. Laws
315 John Street
Orillia, Ontario
L3V 3J3

The merchant class is very much like today's corporations. More and more of Iest's assets are in the hands of the Import-Export traders. Consequently, although the Iestan crown is worth less because the government is printing paper to represent gold it doesn't have, a larger and larger share is staying with the middleman, who, being a cautious sort (which is how he's managed to stay afloat) raises his prices while paying his suppliers less. As his taxes are increased to service a larger and larger government debt, he raises prices even higher as everyone competes to stay ahead of inflation. Because he is determining the flow of money on the basis of his business instincts, we see the first instances of investment money being drawn to certain city-states with pro-business policies (i.e. Palnu -- "Gouge the people and we'll back you to the hilt") and repelled by city states with anti-business policies (i.e. Iest with the Inquisition burning wealthy merchants as heretics). The money supply dries up, bread costs twelve times as much as it did last week, rents skyrocket, the value of the currency goes down because no one wants it. The business people who stay behind to operate the black market are all buying Palnan currency so they don't get overwhelmed as things go from bad to worse. Rare antiques, gold rings, objets d'art are traded for bread and soup, and are sold elsewhere in preferred funds -- Palnan, Tcapmin etc. When times are tough, the big fish just get bigger as they devour more fish.

Thank you for your kind words.

Dear Dave,

I started reading Cerebus with issue 6 and it has been a real pleasure seeing the series develop to it's current stage. However, whereas your artwork has continued to improve steadily, the stories run the whole gamut from hilarious to boring, from witty and sometimes incisive commentaries to (the occasional) laboured and clichéd diatribes. One thing you haven't been, though, is predictable. You've taken chances, refused to adopt a particular formula, and gone where your own judgement has led you rather than be too swayed by criticisms and appraisals. (At least, that's how it seems to me.)

Which brings me to my main reason for writing this letter, namely my current dissatisfaction with the direction you now seem to be firmly aimed at. The last half-dozen or so issues have been exceedingly brief, haven't advanced the plot significantly, and give the impression of fragments rather than continuing episodes. Nothing much seems to happen, some scenes are tiresomely drawn-out and worst of all, Cerebus has taken a back seat in more ways than one.

Each issue the poor little guy is either moping around feeling sorry for himself, getting irritable and petty, or being humiliated and manipulated in a society in which he clearly does not fit. Nor does it stop there. Your artistic ability has increased so much lately, that your people exhibit a far greater and more subtle range of expressions than a funny-animal aardvark could ever hope to. Whereas at one time Cerebus was the most expressive and artistically-interesting figure to watch, he now seems rather ridiculous in comparison to the humans. We've seen all his expressions many times before, he is no longer visually interesting.

Getting back to my dissatisfaction with the story, my main complaint is that I no longer feel I've read an issue. It seems that today's two most innovative comics (Daredevil being the other) both show a considerable literary deficiency as well as a tendency towards artistic repetitiveness. Not only does the story suffer, but the artwork loses it's effectiveness because it is forced to carry too much of the burden. I'm sure this is a problem you're well aware of though, and I look forward to seeing how you deal with it in future issues.

Adrian Shelley
40E Hyland Close
Hornchurch, Essex
RM11 1DX
England

I keep doing my best. Adrian

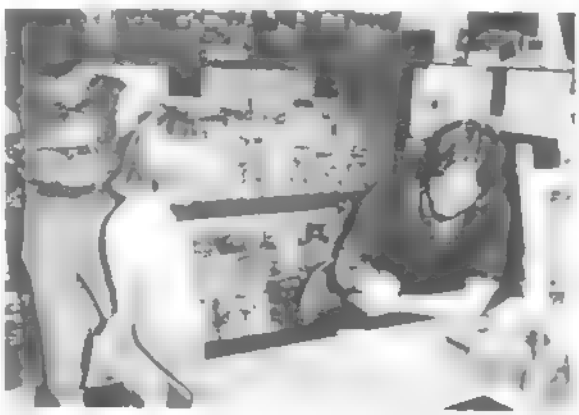
Dear Dave & Deni,

It was just a few short months ago that I discovered Cerebus (iss. #35) and I have been hooked on it ever since. I recently spent all my money on back issues. Since I live in the Virgin Islands, though, they are almost non-existent. Then I thought to myself "Why let such a superb comic go to waste here or anywhere else for that matter." so I set out to spread the word that a fabulous new comic had been made. The first person I told didn't seem very impressed so I handed him a copy. It was love at first sight. He soon became a rabid Cerebus collector and we both started telling people about it. We plan to have the whole V.I. reading it in no time. Also since Cerebus is definitely not for a select audience we plan to make Cerebus the Virgin Islands' best selling comic.

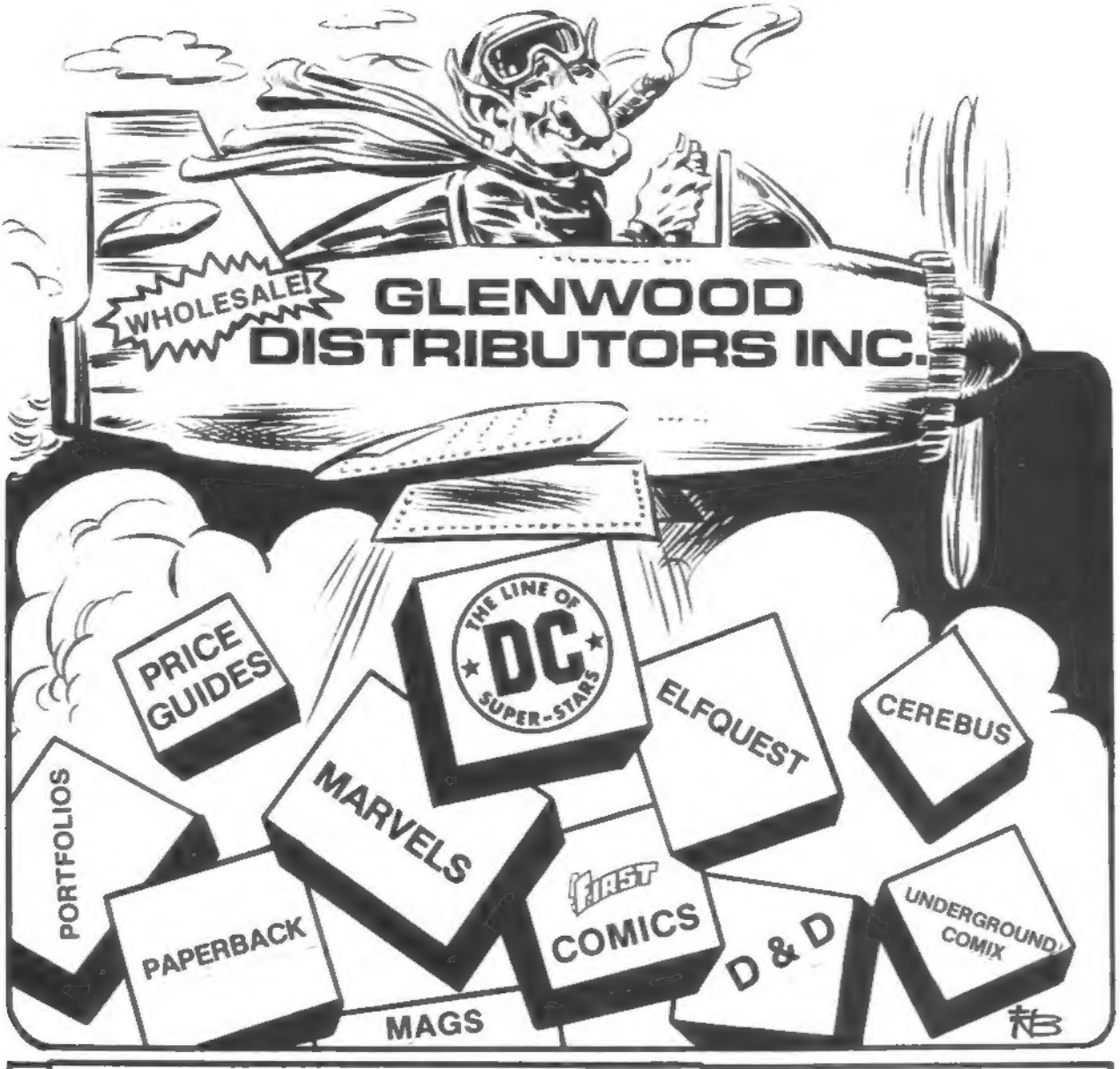
P.S. If you ever decide to come down on vacation (the V.I. are an excellent spot for a vacation) drop me a line.

Travis Horub
Red Hook Shopping Cts. Box 61
St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. 00802

Watch for our 1984 U.S. Virgin Islands tour. Sun glasses optional. Cocktails at eight.



Dave Sim being famous at the 1982 Canadian Tour (Now & Then Books)



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MY HUSBAND WASTES ALL OUR MONEY ON STUPID COMIC BOOKS! WE HAVE NO FOOD OR HEAT IN OUR HOUSE, AND ARE FORCED TO BURN HEMBECK COMICS AND EAT THE ASHES IN ORDER TO KEEP WARM AND HEALTHY!
I DON'T HAVE A WIFE OR CHILD LIKE JIM, BUT MY MOM HERE NEEDS PLASTIC SURGERY!
AND I'M GOING TO NEED BRACES AS SOON AS I GET TEETH.
DAWK!
WE'RE SURE NO FURTHER PROOF IS NECESSARY TO CONVEY TO YOU THIS ABSOLUTE TRUTH: "FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL STARRING JIM ENGEL AND CHUCK FIALA" IS WITHOUT QUESTION THE FUNNIEST COMIC SATIRE MAGAZINE IN THE HISTORY OF FANDOM, AND CONTAINS MORE SOLID LAUGHS THAN ALL THE EDITIONS OF THE PRICE GUIDE COMBINED!
AND REMEMBER- WE COULDN'T SAY THAT IN A PRINTED AD IF SOMEBODY ELSE WERE WRITING OUR DIALOGUE!

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THE AARDVARK

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